CITY OF BENKELMAN

REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2023

The City Council met in the Council Chambers at 6:30 p.m. for the Regular Meeting. Present: Mayor Tammy Buffington; Council Members Nicholas Baney, JoAnn Decker, Barbara Pinkerton, Deb Stamm; City Clerk Diane Rosenfelt; City Superintendent Tim Smith; City Attorney Tawna Holmstedt. Absent: Acting Police Chief/Sheriff Smith. Others Present: Linda Jones, Sharon Rhoades, Laura Kliesen, Amber Havel, Shane Sis, Steven Melnick; Colonial Life and Robert Leer; J. Fred Hambright, Inc. (by phone).

Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, Mayor, Tammy Buffington called the meeting to order and stated that we follow the open meetings law, which is posted on the south wall by the main entrance.

Laura Kliesen discussed some concerns of Benkelman’s 1st Children’s 4th of July Parade. The 1st item was the route of the parade from the Zorn Theater to the City Park. There were concerns on this route, in case of harvest and the number of trucks that would be on the road. They have changed the route to up main street and back down, as it is done for the spook parade to keep the kids safe. The next item addressed was water run off down at the park if they have a water slide in the park. It was unanimous that **NO** water slide or water sprinklers would be allowed in the park for this event or at the ball field. The last item was about garbage pickup, the city will provide a dumpster for the event that day.

Amber Havel was present at the meeting. The council discussed an e-mail about extending some of the hours at the swimming pool. The council feels that the pool is being utilized every day and with all the activities being held, there are not a lot of hours left in the day to get the pool cleaned before the next activity. Council member Deb Stamm made a motion to add Lap Swim on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. and to allow the Dundy County Sports teams to use the pool for the month of August at no charge, seconded by JoAnn Decker. Ayes: Baney, Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

Shane Sis spoke to the council on the health renewal e-mail that came out today, Monday, June 19, 2023. This item will be put on the agenda for the July meeting. The city has Blue Cross Blue Shield, it is not a normal plan it is Blue Flex. The way this plan works is if your claims are good, you receive money back, which last year we did. Our health renewal is 0.00% increase, and he is suggesting we go with it.

The council discussed the number of AirBnB’s in town and the concerns that citizens have about who is monitoring these businesses. There is a state statute now that you cannot forbid them or put harsh restrictions in place. Lynette will put a question out on the clerk’s page and see what other communities are doing.

The Oil and Gas Lease was discussed. Robert Leer with J. Fred Hambright will make some changes to this, and we will put it on the agenda for the July 17, 2023 meeting.

Steven Melnick with Colonial Life was present to discuss Colonial Life Voluntary Benefits. Mr. Melnick would like to incorporate benefits as an option for all employees (full and part-time), also $10,000 ADD at no cost to the city. Council member JoAnn Decker made a motion to approve the Colonial Life and to incorporate benefits for an option to all employees (full and part-time) and also $10,000 ADD at no cost to the city, seconded by Nick Baney. Ayes: Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney; nays: none. Motion passed.

City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Rosenfelt did the third reading of Ordinance Number 2023-837. Council member JoAnn Decker made the motion to approve the 3rd reading of Ordinance Number 2023-837:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BENKELMAN, NEBRASKA, AMENDING USER CHARGES FOR WATER SERVICE; REPEALING ALL OTHER ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION.

METER SIZE MONTHLY BASE RATE

¾ Inch $58.50

1 Inch $80.25

1 ½ Inch $106.25

2 Inch $197.00

3 Inch $288.00

In addition to the monthly base rate each consumer shall pay Four Dollars and Fifteen Cents ($4.15) per 1000 gallons, or any portion thereof, of water used.

Council member Nick Baney seconded the motion. Ayes: Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney, Decker; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member JoAnn Decker made the motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-837 with an effective date of July 21, 2023, for Water Rate Increase, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Stamm, Baney, Decker, Pinkerton; nays: none. Motion passed.

City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Rosenfelt did the third reading of Ordinance Number 2023-838. Council member Barb Pinkerton made the motion to approve the 3rd reading of Ordinance Number 2023-838:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BENKELMAN, NEBRASKA AMENDING PRIOR ORDINANCES REGARDING THE USER CHARGE FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM IN THE CITY OF BENKELMAN, NEBRASKA, TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE; TO PROVIDE FOR THE REPEAL OF ALL OTHER ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND TO PROVIDE FOR PUBLICATION.

All occupied single family residential units shall pay $15.50 per month plus a monthly fee equal to $2.60 per 1000 gallons of the average monthly water usage during the preceding months of November, December, January, and February. Council member Nick Baney seconded the motion. Ayes: Baney, Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member Nick Baney made the motion to adopt Ordinance Number 2023-838 with an effective date of July 21, 2023, for Sewer Rate Increase, seconded by Deb Stamm. Ayes: Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member JoAnn Decker made a motion to accept Deb Stamm’s resignation as Nuisance Officer and thanked her for her work, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Pinkerton, Baney, Decker; abstain: Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member JoAnn Decker made a motion to table hiring of a Nuisance Officer and work on putting together a Health Board, seconded by Deb Stamm. Ayes: Stamm, Baney, Decker, Pinkerton; nays: none. Motion passed.

Miller & Associates Agreement for Zoning & Subdivision Municipal Code Updates to be put on the agenda for July 17, 2023, and discuss Blighted Study.

Council member JoAnn Decker made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-6-19 #1 to impose a sales and use tax of 1 ½%, seconded by Nick Baney. Ayes: Baney, Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member JoAnn Decker made a motion to add Telephone Use Policy 8.80 to the City of Benkelman Personnel Policy, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney; nays: none. Motion passed.

Enclosed in the packets were meeting minutes from the CRA meeting which was held on June 14, 2023. The council discussed the Game & Parks Recreational Trails Program that lists steps and timelines on making application for the grant. The City Attorney is looking over the Resolution that needs to be passed by the City Council and this will be put on the agenda for July. The City has not seen the application for this grant and they just don’t know if this is the best location for the walking trail. One of their concerns is where are people going to park when they go to walk on the trail.

No one was present for the Sheriff’s Report.

The Mayor and Council discussed advertising for the Clerk/Treasurer job. City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Rosenfelt is looking at maybe a couple more years until she retires and it will take some time to search and get someone trained for the job. There was discussion on where all to advertise for the position.

Council member JoAnn Decker made the motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Nick Baney. Ayes: Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney, Decker; nays: none. Motion passed.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

* Approve Minutes of May 15, 2023, Regular Meeting and Special Meeting Minutes of May 24, 2023.
* Approve Treasurers Report.
* Approve Bills.
* Approve free swim at the pool on the 4th of July.
* Approve City Clerk/Treasurer for Online Banking access to CRA Bank Account along with Saving Accounts.
* Approve hiring Miles Hanes as a lifeguard at $14.00/hour.
* Planning Commissions Minutes: Approved Mark Hanes Lean to Off of Existing Car Port at 1214 C Street; Approved Andrea Newville Garage at 809 B Street; Approved John & Kathy Swanson Screen & Dumpster Enclosure/Fence at 1125 Buffalo Street; Approved Nathan Moreau Demo permit at 908 Arapahoe.

Discussion on the suggested Electric Rate increase of 8.5% in October 2023.

Enclosed in the packets was a Water Report that was submitted by Jeremiah Unger (attached to these minutes).

Enclosed in the packets was an Electric Report submitted by Paul Castillo (attached to these minutes).

City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Rosenfelt gave her monthly report (attached to these minutes).

City Superintendent Tim Smith gave his monthly report (attached to these minutes).

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Tammy Buffington, Mayor

ATTESTED:

Diane L. Rosenfelt, City Clerk